

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY KUMASI, GHANA**

**Knowledge and Preparedness of teachers in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality on
Inclusive Education**

By

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DECLARATION

“I, JOSEPH ABABIO DWOMO declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works, which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving wife and children Noble, Princess, Priscilla, and Rosemond Dwomo-Danquah Ababio as well as all others who assisted me in diverse ways on campus.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYM

ESP	-	Educational Strategic Plan
FCUBE	-	Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education
GES	-	Ghana Education Service
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
SENs	-	Special Educational Needs
SSS	-	Senior Secondary School
TLM	-	Teaching learning Material

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural
Organization.

ABSTRACT

Education is a right for all learners and should be made accessible to all learners including special need children. With the introduction of the pilot inclusive education in Ghana, many children with special needs have been admitted in some of these schools together with their peers without special needs and are being taught by general school teachers. For general education teachers to effectively include special needs children in their classrooms, their attitude about inclusion should be positive. It is in the light of this that this research is being embarked on to ascertain general teachers' knowledge and preparedness for inclusive.

The study involved all the five pilot inclusive schools in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. This case study design utilized qualitative data collection method, and a purposive sampling technique was used to select 20 respondents comprising five head teachers, five resource teachers and ten (10) classroom teachers for in-depth interview. The findings of the study indicated that generally, the teachers had no adequate knowledge of inclusive education before the programme was introduced. Besides this major finding, the study also revealed other setbacks to inclusion such as inadequate preparation on the part of regular teachers and negative attitude of teachers towards special needs children.

In conclusion, it is recommended that teachers should have more observation training on teaching special needs children in an inclusive setting to enable them to handle all categories of disabilities in the classrooms effectively. Also, Ghana Education Service, (GES) in collaboration with special education division, should organize workshops, seminars forums as well as symposiums aimed at establishing good rapport and collaboration among the stakeholders of inclusive education. Furthermore, it is suggested that consistent in-service training should be organized for all regular teachers in schools practicing inclusion on pilot bases to refresh their knowledge and equip them with best inclusive practices to enable them manage the pupils.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Countries all over the world consider education as a major tool for human resource development and governments have made education their number one priority. According to Madumere & Uzoka (2006), education is an instrument that can be used by a nation to achieve rapid economic, social, political, cultural and technological advancement. The importance of education to the human potentials makes it a fundamental human right for every member of society. Boison (2006) posited that education is a right for all and must be made accessible to all learners notwithstanding their cultural, linguistic, physical and intellectual backgrounds.

Special Education in Ghana was introduced by the white missionaries as far back as 1936 when Reverend Haker initiated some form of education for the blind at Akuapem (Avoke, 2004). This initiative led to the establishment of many institutions for the various categories of special needs children such as schools for the deaf and schools for the intellectually disabled at different parts of the country. From then came into being the two-fold educational system in Ghana. General education and special education for children without disabilities and those with disabilities respectively.

In Ghana, successive governments have introduced series of policy initiatives with the view of ensuring reforms in educational sector. An important aspect of these reforms and policies has been that education should be for all. Gadagbui, (2010) has stated that the free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), which originated from the

1992 constitution of the Republic of Ghana, aims at expanding, strengthening and making relevant education to *all* children. However it was mentioned that special needs children were not given much attention at the initial stages of the programme. Another important reform, which is currently being undertaken by the government, is the shift from special education to inclusive education. The Salamanca declaration and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education, of which Ghana is a signatory, was the key factor that influenced the move towards inclusion in Ghana (UNESCO, 1994). A portion of the Salamanca statement suggests that children with special needs should be given the same kind of education as their non-disabled counterparts. Advocates of inclusion propose that special needs children should attend general schools in the vicinity where they would have attended if they were not disabled (Avoke 2004). Ibernacho & Osuorji, (2006) assert that the philosophy of inclusive education means that schools accommodate and respond to individual learners and that inclusive benefit the school, the teachers and all students. Inclusive education then became the official policy of the then Ministry of Education Science and Sports (MOESS), and outlined in the Education Strategic Plan (ESP), 2003-2015 (Yekple & Avoke, 2006 p239).

According to Offei (2006), in countries all over the world, inclusion and inclusive practices are being strongly encouraged and in Ghana, pilot projects are ongoing in selected educational districts including Ejisu-Juaben Municipality in Ashanti region. The aim is to provide equal educational opportunities for children and youth with special needs at pre-tertiary levels to promote access and participation, quality and inclusion (National Report 2004).

1.2 Statement of the problem

Inclusive education is a laudable programme and has obvious benefits. In spite of these benefits, its implementation has some problems. One of these problems is the attitude of teachers towards inclusion. According to Abosi & Amissah (2010), education is synonymous with teachers and therefore teachers are at the heart of the implementation of the inclusive programme.

In Ghana's quest to equip teachers with some knowledge about exceptional children, special education was incorporated into the curriculum of teacher training colleges, now colleges of education. Among the reasons for this is that most teachers would at some point in time find themselves teaching children who have some degree of special needs. Another reason is the recognition that children with special needs can develop to productive individuals with effective teaching from general education teachers. Awareness has also been created among general education teachers that exceptionality is not incapability and that special needs students are not extraordinary human beings who require different treatment. Lastly, it has been recognized that general classroom teachers' understanding of the concept of inclusion is of great importance for the smooth implementation of inclusive education Avoke and Avoke (2004).

One of the most important predictors of successfully including students with special needs successfully in the general classroom is the attitude of general education teachers, and it is expected that their training would make them exhibit positive attitude towards inclusion (Ocloo, 2004). However, it appears a segment of trained teachers from the Colleges of Education as well as those from the tertiary institutions lack adequate knowledge to handle pupils with special educational needs (SENs) in inclusive classes.

The researcher's interaction with some general education teachers in some pilot inclusive schools revealed that they had mixed views about the practice of including special needs children in their classrooms. While some teachers were willing to work with special needs children, others were unwilling to receive such children in their classes.

For general education teachers to effectively include special needs children in their classrooms, their attitude about inclusion needs to be critically considered. It is in the light of this that this research is being embarked on to ascertain general teachers' knowledge and preparedness to the pilot inclusive education in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.

1.3 Research questions

The study intends to find answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of teacher's knowledge on inclusive education at Ejisu-Juaben Municipality?
2. How are teachers prepared for inclusive education at Ejisu-Juaben Municipality?
3. What attitudes do the teachers hold towards inclusion of pupils with special needs at Ejisu-Juaben?

1.4 Objectives of the study

Principal objective

To examine the knowledge and preparedness of teachers in Ejisu- Juaben Municipality to inclusive education

Specific objectives

1. To examine teachers' knowledge on inclusive education.
2. To ascertain the nature of teacher preparedness towards inclusive education.
3. To examine the attitude teachers hold towards inclusive of pupil with special needs.

1.5 Justification

In line with international declarations and local enactments on education, such as, the United Nation Convention on rights of persons with disabilities (UNCRPD), the Standard Rules for the Equalization of Opportunities for persons with disabilities, the World Declaration of Education for All, the 1992 Republican Constitution of Ghana, the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education program, the Ghana Disability Act 2006, the Inclusive Education program, and Ghana Education Strategic Plan, the research is justified in the following ways:

The research findings will inform policy makers about the success and failures of the pilot inclusive education program and also afford them opportunity to address the short falls before the program assumed full scale implementation in 2015 as planned. The study will serve as a reference material and body of knowledge for researchers of inclusive education as well as special educators who may embark on a similar research. The study will roll back the frontiers of negative perceptions among the general public about inclusive education.

The study will inform teachers in inclusive schools to diversify their teaching methodology to suit every single child with special need in the regular classroom.

1.6 Scope and limitation of the study

The main limitation of this study is that data were collected from head teachers, resource teachers and general classroom teachers who are from a restricted geographical area. Therefore their responses may not be representative of schools in Ghana. The scope of the study could have covered a larger area or more districts and given more holistic picture of the issue under study. The time frame for the final presentation of the project, as well as inadequate financial support did not permit for a wider coverage of the study. Due to the small sample size, the researcher does not intend to generalize the findings.

1.7 Assumptions

The researcher, before the study, was with the assumption that:

- Teachers did not have enough knowledge about inclusive education.
- Teachers were not adequately prepared for inclusive education.
- Teachers have poor attitude towards inclusive education.

1.8 Organization of the study.

This study is presented in six chapters. The introductory chapter gives a background to the study; it discusses the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, importance of the study and organization of chapters. Chapter two deals with the review of literature related to the study.

The third chapter examines the methodology used in gathering the data. Chapter four takes a look at the analysis of the data where major findings from the study are presented. Chapter five presents the discussions of the major findings, while chapter six deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations for action.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses literature relevant to the study as well as the theoretical context of the study. The review is presented under the following broad themes: concept of inclusion education, teacher preparation, and attitudes of teachers.

2.1 Concept of inclusion

Inclusion is based on values that seek to maximize participation of all learners in an educational institution by minimizing exclusionary and discriminatory practices (Booth, 2005). However, the definition and practice of Inclusive Education can vary significantly between and within cultures, specialists, and educational systems (Dyson, 2000; Booth, 2005). For instance, according to Okyere and Adams (2003) even though current trends in special education practice in relation to the provision of educational facilities focus on inclusion, there is no clear-cut consensus about the definition of inclusion. Similarly, Lindsay (2003) stated that inclusion denotes a complex and contested concept and its manifestations are many and varied. In the view of Eniola & Ajobiewu (2006) the debate about inclusive education is an issue of educational interest throughout the world but inclusion remains a controversial concept in education because it relates to educational and social values as well as our sense of individual worth. All these statements attest to the fact that inclusion is a controversial term that does not lend itself to a single and simple straightforward definition or explanation.

According to UNESCO (2005) “Inclusive education addresses and responds to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures

and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children” (p 22). Booth (2005) defined inclusive education as a means of promoting school success and social integration for persons with and without disabilities. That is, it is the processes of increasing the participation of students in and reducing their exclusion from the cultures, curricula and communities of local schools (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). According to Winzer (2005), inclusive education is a system of equity for students with exceptionalities that express a commitment to educate each child to the maximum extent through placement, instruction and support in the most heterogeneous and appropriate educational environment.

The New Brunswick Association for Community Living (2005) defined inclusive education as a means of developing and designing all schools, classrooms, programs and activities so that all students learn and participate together. Schools that are inclusive are thus those in which all students, regardless of preconceived notions of ability, are welcomed to, and learn together in, heterogeneous classrooms. On the part of Ozoji (2003), inclusive education means the education for all children and youth with and without disabilities studying together in ordinary pre-primary and primary school, college, universities with appropriate network of support.

With inclusive education, special needs children are placed within existing regular classroom along with normal children and special support and services are provided to meet their individual needs. This is because inclusive education recognizes the fact that

each child is a unique learner, and should attend schools in his or her community regardless of physical, intellectual, social, emotional, cultural, religious, linguistic or other differences (Sandkull, 2005). Inclusive education, therefore, provides a place for everyone to belong, be accepted, and supported by his or her peers and other members of the school community in the course of having his or her educational needs met (Skipper, 2006).

Inclusive education acknowledges that learning begins at birth and continues throughout life, and includes learning in the home, the community, and in formal, informal and non-formal situations. Inclusive education recognizes and responds to the diverse needs of students, accommodating both different styles and rates of learning and ensuring quality education to all through appropriate curricula, organizational arrangements, teaching strategies, resource use and partnerships with their communities.

Stubbs (2008) argued that inclusive education seeks to enable communities, systems and structures in all cultures and contexts to combat discrimination, celebrate diversity, promote participation and overcome barriers to learning and participation for all people. It is part of a wider strategy of promoting inclusive development, with the goal of creating a world where there is peace, tolerance, and sustainable use of resources, social justice, and where the basic needs and rights of all are met. Inclusive education is a rights-based approach to educating children and includes those who are subject to exclusionary pressures. Inclusive education creates a learning environment that is child centered, flexible and which enables children to develop their unique capacities in a way which is conducive to their individual styles of learning. The process of inclusion, therefore, contributes to the academic development and social and economic welfare of

the child and its family, enabling them to reach their potential and to flourish (Avoke, 2004)

Mittler (2000) indicated that inclusion involves a radical rethinking of policy and practice and reflects fundamentally a different way of thinking about the origins of learning and behavior difficulties. Mittler is however of the view that inclusion is socially based; there is a shift from defect to social life. The author further explained that inclusion involves a total reform and restructuring of the school system to ensure that all children have complete access to educational and social opportunities in the school environment. These should include access to the curriculum, pedagogy, instructional materials, sports, leisure and recreational opportunities. In the inclusive system, the emphasis is placed on the need for the system to meet the needs of the child as “normally” and inclusively as possible, rather than the child having to be separated or excluded to suit the needs of the system. In other words, the educational system should be structured or re-structured to suite the peculiar needs of the child with disabilities (Ebersohn2000). The inclusive system is, therefore, in consonance with the social model of disability, which sees society as the problem but not the individual.

The issue of support for both the teacher and the learner is also very important in an inclusive system and needs to be considered critically. For example, if the disabled child is placed in the classroom without being given the required support, the child is unlikely to benefit from schooling. Likewise, if the teacher of the class with a special needs child is not supported, the teacher cannot offer the required support to the special needs child. The consequence is that nothing serious happens in terms of education as the special needs child will be unable to participate. Provision of resources and support for both the

teacher and the special needs child in the general classroom are, therefore, key for successful implementation of inclusion (Agbenyega, Deeperler and Harvey, 2005).

2.2 Teacher preparation

The policy of including pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools and classes is firmly established in many countries worldwide and Ghana is not excluded. Successful implementation of such a policy depends on the availability of teachers possessing the requisite knowledge and competencies (Eileen, 2000). As the world moves towards a more inclusive education system, it is imperative to equip teachers to work in more diverse classrooms from the start of their teaching career and development. For that reason, there has been increasing attention on teacher training and development (Whitworth, 2001).

However, several researchers have noted the lack of professional training in inclusive teaching and practices for general and special education at the pre-service level (Burstein & Sears, 1998). According to Hardman, Drew and Egan (2002), preparing a teacher who will deal with children with special needs demands skills, expertise and knowledge that cannot simply be taken for granted. There is a need for such skills, expertise and knowledge to be carefully examined, articulated and communicated so that the significance of the role of the teacher might be more appropriately highlighted and understood within the inclusive education institution. Golder, Norwich and Bayliss (2005), proposed that there should be initiatives aimed at enhancing the knowledge, skills and attitudes of trainee teachers and to equip them to differentiate their teaching to meet the individual needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs.

It has been observed that teacher training programmes in colleges and universities are not offering enough course work on inclusive education to prepare teachers to work in inclusive classrooms, so newly trained teachers are not well prepared to teach in inclusive settings (Pugach & Johnson, 2002). Whitworth (2001) postulated that preparing teachers who can teach in settings that are inclusive and who can handle the needs of all students will require a different model of teacher preparation.

Apart from teachers gaining the requisite knowledge and competencies in handling children with differing needs, it is also important to improve their attitudes towards the implementation of an inclusive policy. Snyder (2002) conducted a cross cultural study of teachers' attitudes towards integration in the USA, Germany, Israel, Ghana, Taiwan and the Philippines. Their findings showed that there were differences in attitude to integration (inclusion) in these countries. Whilst teachers in the USA and Germany were more positive, teachers' attitudes are significantly less positive in Ghana, Philippines, Israel and Taiwan. The authors argued that the negative attitude exhibited by teachers in Ghana, Philippines, Israel and Taiwan compared to the USA could probably be due to limited or non-existing training in these countries for teachers to acquire competencies in integration (inclusion). This appears to be the reason why some authors such as Ali, Mustapha & Jelas (2006) citing Gartner (2001) recommended that, trainee teachers are given structured opportunities to experience inclusive education in practice" (p43). According to Ali, "opportunity to observing how children with special needs are taught in inclusive settings is one of the essential components to the process of breaking down barriers and building positive attitudes" (p.43). However, without the requisite training in inclusive education philosophy, it would be difficult for teachers to accept and offer

the necessary attention to pupils with disabilities in their class. It is through training and adequate preparation that teachers will develop positive attitudes and capacity in handling pupils with special needs (Whitworth, 2001). Consistent with this claim is the submission by Gerent and Hotz (2003), that today's classroom teachers should be prepared to handle all pupils to meet society's complex demands. In other words, not only should teachers be ready to address the growing demand for academic excellence, they should also be increasingly responsible for meeting the needs of diverse groups of pupils including those with disabilities and those who are at risk for school failure. These demands call for the need to provide practical information regarding students' characteristics, effective institutional and behavior management and techniques, consultation skills and individualized instruction to practicing teachers both in general education and special education roles (Gerent & Hotz, 2003).

Teacher preparation and training have therefore attracted considerable attention due to the fact that they are considered important factors in improving teacher attitude towards the implementation of an inclusive policy (Gyimah, Sugden & Pearson, 2009).

Hence, it is imperative that a coherent plan exists for teacher training in special education needs; otherwise any attempt to include children with special needs in the mainstream would be difficult (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002).

Obi and Mensah (2005) noted that the adoption of inclusive education means that the general education teachers who are not specifically and adequately prepared to teach children with disabilities would assume the overall responsibility of educating children with special needs. In addition to the modern teacher's usual roles, Oppong (2003) identified four major new roles expected of them. He outlined them as follows:

Planning and implementing Individualized Education Programmes (IEPs).

Using specialized materials and equipment

Working closely with specialized personnel, and

Working in collaboration with parents and families of children and youth with special needs. It apparently means that the teacher has to obtain and demonstrate some amount of professionalism in the execution of his or her career.

Obi & Mensah (2005) observed that although teacher trainees in teacher training colleges and institutions in Ghana offer special education as part of their educational foundation courses the report by Caseley-Hayford (2002) showed that the course content is not adequate to prepare teachers for inclusive education. The implication of this is that teachers may not be adequately prepared and equipped with the necessary skills before the introduction of inclusive education in Ghana.

The situation is likely to be worst for teachers who left teacher training colleges in Ghana by 1990, because such teachers had no idea about education of children with special needs since special education had not been introduced into the curriculum of teacher training colleges at the time. On the way forward, Mamah (2006) suggested that for this category of teachers in-service training programme will sharpen their skills in handling diversity of children with special needs in their various classrooms and prevent both the teachers and policy makers from practicing on the concept of 'dump and hope. Furthermore, Resolution on Inclusive Education added that;

Teacher training programs at the in-service and pre service levels that are inclusive and collaborative of general and special education teachers should be adopted so that all teachers will be prepared to teach all students effectively;

Appropriate staff development programmes for administrators, teachers, family members, paraprofessionals, and related services staff which will develop the necessary understandings, skills and behaviors and,

Professional development designed to ensure that teachers of students with disabilities are knowledgeable about research based practices for effectively teaching students to high standards.

2.3 Teachers' attitude towards inclusion

A reaction is a response that reveals a person's feelings or attitude. Teachers' reactions towards inclusion can therefore best be explained in terms of their attitudes towards inclusive education (Adams, 2003). According to Encarta Dictionary (2009), an attitude is a personal view of something; it is an opinion or general feeling about something.

Clemens (1997) reported that in most discussions about inclusion, a central argument against inclusive education is that teachers are not prepared to work with students with disabilities. Negative teacher attitude was evident in a study by Dadzie-Bonney (1997). The study revealed that some children who acquired hearing loss in the course of their education were not allowed to continue their education in their community schools. The main reason for this refusal is lack of knowledge in managing such children in the classroom. Yekple and Avoke (2006) confirmed this claimed and indicated that a number of teachers expressed concern and apprehension as to whether they were practically confident in teaching children with special needs effectively. For this reason, teachers feel that any child identified to have some form of impairment should be sent to a special school.

Related to the above is what Mock and Kauffman (2002) described as the *catch* in which teachers may find themselves. On one hand, teachers cannot be prepared to answer the unique educational needs of every student with special needs, and on the other hand, teachers in inclusive classes might function beyond their training and specialization. On their part, Subban and Sharma (2006) stated that teachers viewed teaching students with disabilities as difficult and stressful. Besides, teachers appear to be concerned about the non-acceptance of such students by their non-disabled peers (Danne, 2000, Menlove, 2001 cited in Subban& Sharma 2006).

In a similar vein, Alghazo and Gaad (2004) commented that the majority of studies that have been conducted on the attitudes towards learners with disabilities and their inclusion in general education classrooms have found that teachers tended to have negative attitudes. Commenting on the same issue, Wamae& Kang (2004) observed that many investigations have sought to establish class teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities. They cited studies such as Alexander and Strain (2006), Horne (2007) Baum and Fratiza (2008), Baker and Gotlieb (2003) and Anderson (2003) as notable examples of studies that have reported relatively unfavorable teacher attitudes towards pupils with special educational needs as well as a certain amount of unwillingness on the part of teachers to receive disabled children in their classes.

Some studies have linked teachers' attitude towards inclusion to their previous experience with children with disabilities. For example, a study on teachers attitudes towards inclusive education in Jordanian schools disclosed that teachers, who had experience with students with special needs in mobility and other physical disabilities,

were most supportive of the idea of including students with disabilities but were negative towards including students with behavior disorders(Gadagbui,2004).

Furthermore, some studies have found that college students in a teaching program had a fear of receiving children with special needs because they did not feel prepared and knowledgeable (McLeskey, Henry, & Hodges, 1999). Some college students were even deciding not to major in education because of stories they heard from others about the behavior of students with special needs in the classroom (Busch, Pederson, Espin, &Weissenbarger, 2001). It should be noted also that many of undergraduate students who majored in education are only expected to take one single course in special education, and once they become general educators, most are unsure of how to deal with and teach students with special needs, especially if there is no assistance from paraprofessionals (Yellin,Yellin, Claypool, Mokhtari, Carr, Latiker, Riseley & Szabo,2003). Some comparative studies on teaching students with disabilities and those without disabilities have been conducted. Shea & Bauer (2000), for instance, reported a survey on the status of special education in the United States conducted by Louis Harris and Associates. The survey results suggested that the majority of educators had modified teaching and testing conditions to accommodate students with disabilities. Educators, however, maintained that they were less successful with persons with disabilities than with persons without disabilities. Agbenyega, Deppeler, & Harvey (2005), similarly revealed that a Meta-analysis of research dating as far back as 2001 found that, of the 10,560 general education teachers surveyed across the years, approximately two-thirds had positive attitudes towards inclusion, but were concerned with many other classroom issues such as resource supplies, collaboration and support. Some sources also pointed out that although some teachers may have positive feelings towards inclusive education,

their degree of enthusiasm decreased when the concept of inclusion was personalized, for example, when participants were asked to react to questions, such as, “Are you willing to teach students with visual problems in your regular classroom?” (Houk and Rogers, 2000, McGregor and Vegolsberg).

Apart from teacher training, Subban and Sharma (2006) claimed that previous research about inclusive education found a link between demographic and contextual variables and teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education. Variables such as teacher’s gender (Avramidis, 2000; Van Reusen, 2001), age (Cornoldi, Terreni, Scruggs, & Mastropierri, 2004), level of qualification in special education (Clayton, 1996) and the severity of the students disability (Agran, Alper, & Wehmeyer, 2002; Kuester, 2000) have previously been found as factors that may shape teachers attitudes towards students with disabilities. On gender of teachers and inclusion, Al-Zyoudi (2005) revealed that there was little difference between the opinions of female teachers and male teachers although female teachers were more positive towards educating special needs students in inclusive settings than male teachers (Adams, 2001). A study about teachers’ attitudes towards inclusive education in Jordanian schools found that teachers were emphatic that there was the need for either special classes or special schools for the students if the disability was severe. In the same study, it emerged that the attitude towards inclusion became positive as school buildings were made accessible to students with special needs. All participants who had facilities that made special needs students mobile were positive towards inclusion than those teachers whose schools did not have facilities (Sharma, 2005).

In addition, when the issue of the nature of disability was raised, the teachers mentioned that students with specific disabilities should be included but the most frequently mentioned were students with physical disabilities. Samuel (2001) mentioned other factors that might cause teachers to raise objections to inclusion; for example, large number of students in a class, budget shortages, workload, and difficulties in standardized evaluation. Also some teachers talked about the lack of teamwork, and asked for guidance in dealing with students with special needs (Danne & Beirne-Smith, 2000).

Some of the mainstream teachers claimed that they had not chosen to teach special educational needs children but the inclusion policy forced them into areas they were unsure about or not interested in (Vaughn, 2001). The fact that some teachers are raising concerns that inclusion is being forced on them and that special education is not a field they had willingly chosen suggest that inclusion should be implemented with caution. Proper teacher orientation is a necessary pre-requisite for the policy of inclusion to be embraced by teachers.

There have also been fears that the dynamics within the inclusive setting will affect the academic progress of students (Forlin1998) cited in Subban & Sharma, 2005).

According to Ali, Muatapha & Jelas (2006) some educators and parents have expressed concern that the inclusion of students with disabilities into general classrooms may disrupt school activities. Their worry was that inclusion slows educational progress both for students with disabilities and for their non - disabled peers.

Finally, the notion that special needs students are likely to “dilute” standards of education in general schools is another threat to the successful inclusion education practice. Educators are concerned that including students will lower standards in two ways. Firstly, their own academic progress will be modest with resultant low grades. Secondly, their presence in the classroom will affect the progress of other students negatively (Bunch, 2007). Traditional emphasis on the lockstep curriculum and meeting standards for the next grade is viewed by many as appropriate and necessary. Hence, those who cannot meet these standards should not be in classrooms under the responsibility of general education teachers (Bunch, Lupart, & Brown 2007). Supporting such reasoning, Mamah (2006) pointed out that in many countries such as Ghana, mainstream schools are under increasing pressure to raise academic standards. These schools are therefore reluctant to admit and retain pupils whose presence would have a negative impact on the overall profile of results. Current trends in the Ghanaian educational system also point to the maintenance of standards. Basic Education

Certificate Examination results are analyzed and a “league table” prepared indicating the performance of each Education District. Similarly, the performance of all Senior High Schools (SHS) in the country is computed, a “league table” prepared and published in the national dailies. As a result, school heads, and even District Directors of Education are concerned about the examination results of their schools and districts respectively. They are therefore not willing to compromise their standard by including students with special needs because of the preconceived notion that they are likely to lower standards (Avoke, 2004)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This section deals with the method used in obtaining data for the study. It involves the research design, the study population, sample and sampling technique, description of instrument, data collection procedures, data analysis, and validity and reliability of instrument.

3.1 Research Design

The design is a case study in which teachers in pilot inclusive schools in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality were observed and interviewed. Case studies involve empirical investigation of a particular phenomenon within its real context using multiple sources of evidences (Robson, 2002). Considering the purposes of case studies and the intent of this research, which is to investigate teachers' attitude towards the pilot inclusive schools in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality, a Case study design is deemed appropriate.

This study adopted a qualitative data collection method. Qualitative research methods allows the researcher to get close to the data thereby developing the analytical, conceptual and categorical components of explanations from the data itself rather than from preconceived rigidly structured and highly quantify techniques (Avoke, 2005, cited in Robson, 2001). This researcher takes recognition of Kannae's (2004) assertion that the primary strength of qualitative methods are that they permit adaptation to changing conditions and/or new insights that is in- depth inquiry and open to all aspects of the situation under investigation. Yin (1994) is of the opinion that "qualitative inquiry is the type of methodology in which the description of observation is not ordinarily expressed in quantitative terms" (p23). Qualitative research takes into consideration the holistic description of whatever is been observed, rather than comparing the effects of a particular treatment as quantitative research does. Qualitative research also seeks insight into issues rather than statistical analysis. It studies phenomena in its natural settings. The researcher deemed qualitative method useful in that it helped to conduct an in-depth exploration of the issue being investigated.

3.2 Target Population

The target populations for the study consisted of all teachers in the five inclusive pilot schools in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality. The estimated teacher population for the five inclusive schools was 60 comprising 32 males and 28 females. The sample for the study is 20 teachers, made up of 5 head teachers, 5 special education coordinators and 10 teachers(five male and five female) two from schools.

3.3 Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling technique was employed in selecting 20 teachers from the five pilot inclusive schools in Ejisu-Juaben. Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to select only those who are knowledgeable on the topic under study and can provide useful information. In purposive sampling, the units of the sample are intentionally picked for study because of their qualities which are not randomly distributed in the universe, but they are typically or they exhibit most of the characteristics of interest to the study (Kumekpor, 2000). In the current study, participants were selected with the belief that each member of the study population holds vital information needed to explain the issue being investigated.

3.4 Pilot Study

A pilot study involving four teachers from Agona Seventh Day Adventist primary school, an inclusive school, was conducted. The researcher chose this school because it was one of the schools which exhibit similar characteristics as the schools of interest to the researcher. After the pilot study, some of the questions were rephrased to make them clearer for the respondents. A period of one and half weeks was used for the pilot study.

3.5 Validity and reliability of instruments

Validity is one of the basic principles of research and it is the ability to produce findings that are in agreement with the theoretical or conceptual values, in other words, to produce accurate results and to measure what it is supposed to measure (Sarantakos 2011). A valid measure produces true results that reflect the true situation and condition of environment it is supposed to study.

After the instruments were designed, they were read over several times to identify mistakes that might have been overlooked during the setting stage. Ambiguous items were restructured or deleted. To ensure validity of the findings, respondents' views, which were recorded manually, were read to them. This gave the respondents the opportunity to determine if their view were accurately recorded.

Furthermore, the use of two instruments –interview and observation – in the study, allowed triangulation of the data. According to O'Donoghue and Punch (2003), triangulation is a “method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data (Punch, 2003). The use of triangulation in the research therefore increased the credibility and validity of the result.

3.6 Procedure for Data collection

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction explaining the research focus to the authorities at Ejisu-Juaben Municipal Education Office. Upon receiving the permission the researcher visited the Schools to collect data from the teachers. The interview guide were administered to each teacher independently by the researcher and the research assistant playing the assisting role of recording and transcribing the views expressed by the respondents. However, the researcher, where necessary explained some questions that were unclear to respondents.

3.7 Instrumentation

The following instruments were used for the study: observation and interview

3.7.1 Observation

Observation of teachers in the classroom and their activities during break and extracurricular was conducted. Observing classroom and extracurricular activities enabled the researcher to find out the kind of activities and interactions that went on during teaching and learning as well as extracurricular periods. It enabled the researcher to acquaint himself with the kinds of methods, activities and skills that were used by the teachers to teach special needs children during teaching and learning and the support given to them outside the classroom.

Observation was used because it enabled the researcher to obtain information in its primary form, because observation put little or no pressure on the respondents. The observation also gave the researcher the opportunity to find out things on the ground personally and to crosscheck the results with other instruments. Additionally, observation gave the researcher the opportunity of recording events spontaneously as they occurred and provided data that relate to the typical behavioral situations. In the view of Macmillan and Schumacher (2007) observation has an advantage of the researcher not worrying about the limitation of self-reporting bias, social desirability, and the information is not limited to what can be recorded as it occurs naturally.

The observation was naturalistic using an observation guide to collect information on the following issues: location of schools, classroom activities, out of classroom activities, interaction between teachers and pupils, and extracurricular activities.

3.7.2 Interview

In-depth one-on-one interview was conducted for teachers in the inclusive schools. Robson (2003) states that interviews typically involves a researcher, asking questions and hopefully receiving answers from people being interviewed.

Although interviews involves asking series of questions and following a procedure decided upon beforehand, the interviewer is largely free to arrange the form and timing of the questions. Also, the interviewer can rephrase the questions, modify them and add some new questions to the list (Koul, 2008). The rephrasing and modification of questions allowed for greater flexibility, which made it possible for questions to be rephrased when necessary and also to probe for more details to understand responses of participants towards inclusive education.

The interview guide was in two sections. The first section specifically sought demographic data of respondents: gender, number of years teaching, educational qualification and grade levels taught. In section two, the items sought information on teachers 'attitudes, preparedness to teach children with disabilities and their level of interactions with persons with disabilities. The interviews were recorded by the researcher using audio tape recorder. In addition, important points raised by respondents were written down by secretary. Each interview lasted for 120 minutes.

3.8 Data Analysis

Kannae (2004) defined data analysis as the process of bringing order to the data by organizing it into categories, patterns and trends. Data collected from interviews were transcribed verbatim by three different persons. The transcription was done by playing back the recorded version of the responses. The three different transcriptions were

compared to ensure accuracy in the transcription of the recorded responses. The transcribed version of the response was submitted to a cross section of the respondents to read through to make further corrections if any. The data were then categorized into themes in relation to the research questions. Quotes from respondents were used to support their respective themes.

Thematic approach is the most common form of analysis in qualitative research. It emphasizes pinpointing, examining and recording patterns within data. Themes are pattern across data set that are important to the description of a phenomenon and are associated to a specific research (Cresswell, 2005). The themes become the categories for analysis.

3.9 Ethical consideration

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology ethical code of conducting research with human subjects was followed throughout the fieldwork. The researcher strived to be unbiased, accurate and honest as much as possible during all phases of the study. Ethical clearance was obtained from the university's research committee as well as Ghana Education Service, at Ejisu-Juaben. Efforts were also made to protect the confidentiality and anonymity of participants and to ensure that they were not exposed to any risk during the study. Each participant was asked to sign an informed consent form which described the purpose of the study, the risks, benefits, and the voluntary nature of their participation before they were interviewed.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research methodology of the study. Issues discussed in this chapter include: instruments used in the study, data collection procedures, data

analysis, ethical considerations and the reliability and validity of the design. The next chapter presents findings from the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the presentation of the findings of the study which consist of the responses from teachers, head teachers as well as resource teachers. It provided responses on the knowledge and preparedness of teachers in Ejisu-Juaben Municipality for inclusive education. The findings are presented according to the three main research questions and under the following headings: demographic characteristics of respondents, teachers' knowledge on inclusion, teacher preparation and attitude of teachers towards inclusion.

4.1 Demographic characteristics of participants

The main demographic features of participants analyzed in this study included the position participants' held, gender, teaching experience, qualification and rank. As shown on Table 1 below, the highest rank among the participants was Assistant Director II (15%) while the lowest rank was Senior Superintendent II (25%). These participants had Master's degree (10%), Bachelor's degree (50%) and Diploma (40%). The findings

indicated that 15% of the participants had working experience of between 1 and 5 years, 25% had worked between 6 and 10 years, 20% had worked between 11 and 15 years and 40% had worked for 16 years and above. The demographic characteristics of participants are summarized in Table I.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Category	Number of Participants	Percentage%
Category		
Head Teachers	5	25
Teachers	10	50
Resource Teachers	5	25
Total	20	100
Rank		
Assistant Director II	3	15
Principal Superintendent	8	40
Senior Superintendent I	4	20
Senior Superintendent II	5	25
Total	20	100
Qualification		
Master's Degree	2	10
Bachelor Degree	10	50
Diploma	8	35
Total	20	100
Sex		
Male	12	60
Female	8	40
Total	20	100
Years of Teaching		
1-5	3	15
6-10	5	25

11-15	4	20
16 and above	8	40
40 Total	20	100

Source: Field Data, 2015

4.2 Indicators of Teachers' readiness for inclusion

Before implementing any major educational policy, it is important to assess the readiness of teachers who play a pivotal role in the policy. Effectively assessing teachers' readiness for the new task requires identifying indicators that will serve as measure for the assessment. Some of the indicators used in the study to determine whether or not teachers were ready for inclusive education included knowledge of inclusive education, embracing the concept, preparation and training, appropriateness of teaching strategies as well as inclusion of children with disabilities in extra curricular activities.

4.3 Knowledge of inclusive education

Analysis of the interview revealed that all the teachers did not have any idea on inclusive education before their schools were selected for the pilot study. Their lack of knowledge is attributed to the fact that although inclusive education was not part of their pre-services training, they were not given any in-service training on inclusive education. Some of the teachers in the pilot schools commented as follows.

I completed training college many years ago and at that time, there was nothing like inclusive education in the college curriculum. I think it was introduced later after I have completed so I have no idea about this inclusive education (field data collected 2014).

I think the officer in charge of the disabled children at the educational directorate should have educated those of us in the classroom on this inclusive education but it will surprise you to know that as at now no meaningful course of the sort has been given to us on this inclusive education (field data collected 2014)

To be frank with you, general classroom teachers needed to be taken through a thorough refresher course on this inclusive education issue before its implementation but no officer even came to talk to us about it and it surprises me a lot (field data collected 2015).

However, the head teachers as well as the resource teachers seemed to have undergone some training and claimed to be knowledgeable on inclusive education.

For example, one head teacher indicated that: “Yes I was giving five days in-service training by the Municipal Education directorate before my school was selected for the programme.” Another head teacher commented that:

All head teachers of pilot inclusive schools in the Municipality attended a training workshop on inclusion before we were allowed to practice so I can't say I have no idea about the programme. (Field data collected 2014).

Similarly, the resource teachers claimed they had adequate knowledge about inclusion. A resource teacher stated that, “I am more knowledgeable on inclusive education. I was taught inclusive education during my first degree. And I have been posted here to support regular teachers.” Another resource teacher remarked that:

I have four good years training on inclusion, full time special educationist posted here to serve the purpose of my training so I know what I am here for and I am doing exactly what is expected of me (field data collected 2014)

From the above comments, it is evident that teachers were not conversant with inclusive education before the pilot study took off in the schools.

Embracing the concept

Even though responses from the participants suggest that the teachers had little or no knowledge about inclusion education before its implementation in their schools, some of them indicated that they accepted the concept after the peripatetic officer met them

and briefed them on the concept. As a result of the awareness created by the peripatetic officer, some of them claimed their perception about disability changed and became more tolerant to children with disabilities. For example, a teacher indicated “the policy has helped us to identify and appreciate the capabilities of persons with disabilities”, while another teacher supported this assertion and said:

Now I feel comfortable to chat, play and even to the extent of sending a disabled child to buy me food, one of the most difficult things I would have done without this inclusive programme.

The following comments further illustrate teachers’ support for inclusion education.

The policy is good; I can’t see anything wrong with this inclusive education. Some of us who were initially against the policy and were distance from the disabled pupils due to our negative perceptions can now interact comfortably with the disabled pupils. Also both the disabled and nondisabled children play together because they now see themselves as friends or brothers and sisters (field data collected 2014).

It has enabled us to understand these disabled pupils better than before because we now know some of their behaviors, the way they do their things as well as acknowledging and appreciating their needs which was not so at the initial stages of the inclusive programme in the school(field data collected 2014)

Comments from head teachers suggest that they were also in full support of the policy.

“The head masters were willing to accept children with disabilities because disability is universal and can affect anyone. And so it is wise to educate them and their peers in their local schools (field data collected 2014)

This is government educational policy and head teachers are the implementers of such policies on the grounds so it is my duty as a head teacher to ensure the success of the policy at least in my school here (field data collected 2014)

Similarly, comments by the resource teachers suggest that they had positive attitude towards the policy. Two resource teachers explained that they supported the policy because unlike segregation, inclusion has a lot of benefits for disabled children although they envisaged some difficulties in its implementation.

The seeming consensus among the respondents suggests that the inclusive educational policy appears to have been accepted by the general classroom teachers, heads and the resource teachers although classroom teachers seemed to be unfamiliar with the policy.

4.4 Preparation and training

The data from the interview suggest that general classroom teachers were not adequately prepared for teaching special needs children. Some of the teachers expressed their frustration about lack of adequate preparation to handle children with special needs. The following remarks by some of the teachers indicate the concern of the teachers regarding their readiness for inclusion:

We were not trained to teach these children, unless intensive in-service training is organized for us it will be very difficult for us or it will take a long time for us to be able to execute the task ahead effectively(field data collected 2014)

An officer just met the teachers and parents of the pupils with disabilities one day in the school and talked to us. These handicapped children have been admitted in the school without training us adequately about how to teach them as well as what materials and equipment to teach them (field data collected 2014)

I cannot say I was adequately prepared to teach these disabled pupils because the training I had from college is far different from what I am expected to practice in classroom. As at now, I don't know whether I am doing the right thing or not (field data collected 2014)

Teacher preparation with regard to teaching of handicapped pupils under this inclusive education programme is nothing to write home about. No single day training has been provided yet regular teachers are expected to give up our best at the end of the day (field data collected 2014)

Not at all, I am not fully prepared. I still need some training to be well equipped with enough skills and techniques to do the work especially when there are two or more pupils with different kinds of disabilities in the same class(field data collected 2014)

Contrary to the views of the teachers, the head teachers were more positive about their readiness to implement inclusive education. As indicated by remarks by the some of the head teachers

Yes I was adequately prepared before the programme took off. Head teachers were given training ahead of the introduction of the programme which to me is enough to handle and manage the programme at the school level (field data collected 2014)

I can say I was highly prepared to implement the inclusive education because I feel ok with the training offered us by the directorate. Perhaps what is lacking is logistics which is beyond my authority. It is the responsibility of the government and Ghana education service to provide that verbatim expression of (field data collected 2014)

Preparation on my part is so far so good. The duties of the head teacher under this inclusive education programme are nothing extremely different from our regular work it is about their admission and ensuring their involvement as well as participation” (field data collected 2014)

The resource teachers shared similar sentiments as the head teachers – they were adequately prepared for the inclusive programme although inadequate resources and lack of collaboration were hindering their work. A Resource teachers Tikrom primary school, Kubease primary school, and Ntrepoaso primary school respectively expressed their opinion about their preparation for inclusion in the comments below

Preparation on my part as a resource teacher is very adequate because I am a graduate from university of education Winneba department of special education, I was purposely trained for the job and I was also given orientation prior to my posting as a resource teacher in this school(field data collected 2014).

On adequate preparation, I will say is both yes and no. The reason is that for my personal preparedness I have more than enough and ever ready to work but the second aspect which is transport to visit schools in the circuit and other material resources to enhance the work is lacking. (Field data collected 2014)

Resource teachers are adequately prepared towards inclusive education. The programme rested on our shoulders and we work hand in hand with regular teachers but sometimes the corroboration between us is not the best

From the above analysis, it is clear that although head teachers and resource teachers had some training to prepare them for the inclusion, the classroom teachers, who work directly with the children, had no adequate preparation before the implementation of the inclusive education. It should also be noted that some of the head teachers and resource teachers who claim to be prepared towards inclusion complained about unavailability of teaching learning materials as well as other resources for the implementation of the programme.

4.5 Teaching strategies

Since the teachers were not given adequate training and resources, they adopted their own teaching strategies. For example, responses from the interview revealed that most of the teachers (98 %) did not prepare and organize their teaching in a way that would be friendly to the individual needs of the children. They also did not develop differential expectations for different pupils in the classrooms. Some of the teachers even thought that children with special needs should be sent to special schools. The following responses from some of the teachers illustrate the above assertions:

I do not prepare my work separately for the handicapped pupil and nonhandicapped pupils I don't know how I can do that. What are the special schools doing? That is their best place for their educational placement and development if we really aimed at making these children responsible citizens (field data collected 2014)

It is difficult trying to help all these children at the same time but I think I am doing my best. To do that effectively means more time should be devoted to the handicapped at the expense of all the other pupils which are almost impossible (field data collected 2014)

To be frank with you, I don't really include them in my planning. You see, it was not part of my training at college, the programme has just been introduced and imposed on us so it is difficult to work in such situation but I hope with time I will get used to it and things will be better (field data collected 2014)

Another teacher complained and even suggested a postponement of the inclusive programme because of lack of resources and inadequate teacher preparation.

This is my first time of coming into contact with these groups of children, the programme should be suspended and implemented at appropriate time when there is enough resources and qualify teachers with enough knowledge and skills to handle this special needs children(field data collected 2014)

On the contrary, response from some head teachers as well as resource teachers

Showed that they held positive attitude towards the inclusion of special needs

children in the general school. Although they supported the assertion that

classroom teachers were not adequately prepared for inclusion, they (head

teachers) often supervised and supported the classroom teachers to handle

children with special needs. For example, a head teacher stated that.:

Well, most of my teachers don't usually include special needs children when preparing their lessons but sometimes I personally go round the classrooms to make sure that these kids are involved in the actual lessons(field data collected 2014).

Some of the head teachers even claimed that they used their own money to buy teaching and learning materials:

Oh yes special needs children are included in the class because despite the fact that the capitation grant is not forth coming I sometimes use my own money to buy the teachers some of the items they need to make the lesson benefit the disabled children(field data collected 2014)

I make sure that concrete learning materials are used by teachers and special needs children give good response. Always I encourage the teachers to have special needs children in mind throughout the planning and presentation of the lessons to ensure their participation in class(field data collected 2014)

I have attempted to organize some short time in-service training for my teachers in a way to include special needs children in their lesson planning but they are not showing interest. I have not stopped; I will continue to talk to them till the right thing is done. I also think it will be good for the municipal education directorate to organize proper in-service training for all the teachers involved in the inclusion programme (field data collected 2014)

It is evident from the above that most of the teachers lacked adequate preparation towards the inclusion of special needs children in the classroom, and as a result, did not provide individual attention to the special needs children in the classroom. Some even suggested for the suspension of the inclusion programme and reintroduce it at the right time, suggesting lack of preparation on the part of teachers for inclusion.

4.6 Inclusion in extracurricular activities

Inclusion of children with special needs in extracurricular activities is also one of the indicators of the readiness of teachers for inclusion. It was evident from the findings that while some teachers excluded children with special needs in extra-curricular activities, others actively included them in some of the extra-curricular activities. The comments below depict the views of the respondents concerning the inclusion of children with special needs in extra-curricular activities.

I have not and I will never involve a special need child in outdoor game. What good do they have to offer than injuries that will worsen their condition and compounded to the teacher's problems? I have been stopping them from engaging their able peers in vigorous activities. (Field data collected 2014)

What for? These special children are best fitted into special schools because they require special tools, equipment and special tutors for their co-curricular activities which are available in those schools. It is simply impossible for me to include them in such activities in this school. (Field data collected 2014)

I don't exclude or ignore the disabled from taking part in any activity. I allow the pupils to play football, fetch water, weed in the school garden, and take part in sports and games together with non-disabled counterparts and even converse with them. I mean those in my class (field data collected 2014)

I don't have any problem interacting with them both in-and-outside the classroom activities. One thing we should understand is that these children are human beings just like anyone of us and it is morally wrong to shank their company (field data collected 2014)

I join the class during other activities outside the classroom I do interact with them especially when I see a disabled child is lonely during break time I normally receive their complains and settle problems between them and their non-disable

friends. I do that to strengthen their relationship including myself... (field data collected 2014)

The head teachers also supported the inclusion of all children in extra-curriculum activities irrespective of their disability.

As a head master it is my duty to ensure that all children partake in activities like weeding, sweeping of the compound, worship, sports and games which occurs in my school. However, he indicated that the selection for school competition is based on ability and competency (field data collected 2014).

One of the head teacher explained:

Education is important for the total development of all children and that cocurricular activities are used to identify pupil's hiding talents which I believe special needs children also possess. As such it is his responsibility as the head to make sure they (children with disabilities) are involved to develop their talent (field data collected 2014).

Corroborating what the heads teachers said some of the resource teachers gave their responses as follows:

I observe and interact a lot with teachers and special needs children themselves especially during co-curricular activities to ensure that they are not excluded. It is my duty to ensure their participation in such activities to enjoy full benefits of the regular school setting equally as their able peers. (field data collected 2014)

Inclusion doesn't concentrate only on academics but co-curricular activities as well. I have personally included a low vision pupil in an inter classes football match and he played very well. They have talents and I encourage their inclusion in all activities of the school (field data collected 2014)

The responses indicate that teachers who claim to have constant interactions with children with special needs excluded them when they came nearer to them especially when they felt nobody was watching. Some of the teachers also made derogatory remarks about the special needs children for others to laugh and also for their own mates to shank their company

Hmm, the truth is that whilst some of us are trying to prevent isolation, others are creating barriers by the utterances they make such as "apakyenyansanii" (a wise cripple) "anikoro" (a one-eyed person) which are seriously influencing

the normal ones to disassociate themselves from their own mates who are disables(field data collected 2014)

4.7 CONCLUSION

In terms of the teacher's knowledge on inclusion, it was found that classroom teachers did not have adequate knowledge on inclusive education before its implementation. On the other hand, resources as well as head teachers claimed they were knowledgeable and well equipped with some practices on the concept of inclusion.

The findings further revealed that most of the general schoolteachers exhibited negative attitude towards the implementation of inclusive education and did not plan their lessons in a way that would suit the individual needs of special needs children. On co-curricular activities, the findings seem to present divergent views of respondents. While some of the teachers excluded the special needs children in cocurricular activities, others actively involved them. The next chapter will discuss these findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This study examined teachers' knowledge and preparedness towards the implementation of pilot inclusive education at Ejisu-Juaben Municipality of Ashantiregion of Ghana. This chapter discusses the results from the study in relation to the literature review.

5.1 Summary of Key Findings

The findings revealed many challenges associated with the implementation of the pilot inclusive education at Ejisu-Juaben Municipality; the major challenge being inadequate preparation of teachers for the inclusive programme. For example, teachers were not given any training before the introduction of the inclusive programme in their schools, and so, many of them had inadequate knowledge about inclusive education. Moreover, it was found that teachers were adopting teaching strategies that were unfavorable to children with disabilities and were also mistreating them. These issues are discussed in the following sections.

5.2 Discussions

Teacher's knowledge on inclusion

The study finding that teachers were not familiar with inclusive education before its introduction in their respective schools, suggest that the implementation of inclusive education in the district would likely encounter obstacles. This is because teachers' knowledge and attitude are key to quality education and central to the success of

inclusion. According to DeBettencourt (2002), teachers' knowledge of inclusive education increases their ability to provide modifications for pupils of diverse needs in the same classroom. However, as indicated by the findings from the study, teachers in inclusive schools in the study area lacked adequate knowledge, skills, and techniques to practice inclusion due largely to inadequately preparation for inclusion. Without adequate training and preparation, teachers would be less sensitive and responsive to the needs of children with special needs, which would in turn affect the participation and performance of the children. The importance of teacher preparation before the introduction of new educational policies was stressed by Hardman, Drew and Egan (2002), who argued that preparing teachers who will deal with children with special needs demands skills, expertise, and knowledge that cannot simply be taken for granted. Rather, there is a need for such skills, expertise, and knowledge to be carefully examined, articulated and communicated so that the significance of the role of the teacher might be more appropriately highlighted and understood within the inclusive education institution.

5.3 Lack of adequate training and preparation

The study finding that almost all general education teachers in the schools were not adequately trained and prepared to handle children with special needs suggests inadequate preparation on the part of Ministry of education (MOE) and Ghana Education Service (GES) towards the implementation of the inclusive system. As indicated previously, without adequate training and preparation, the implementation of inclusion would likely face challenges. As Friends and Bursuck (2011) noted when teachers are not well trained for inclusion before it is implemented, it will face challenges.

It is worthy to note that probably most of the general teachers completed their pre-service training at a time when inclusive education was not introduced into the curriculum of colleges of education. Such teachers were not trained to teach special needs children and so lack the knowledge and skills to do so. These teachers required some in-service training to augment their knowledge and skills as well as professional competency in teaching special needs children. However, the findings of the study indicated that general teachers were not given any in-service training to inform and update their knowledge on inclusive education although inclusion was not part of their pre-service training. This suggests that teachers were not cognitively and psychologically ready for inclusive education. Perhaps, inadequate preparations coupled with lack of in-depth knowledge were the reasons for some general education teachers' negative attitude towards special needs children. It may also be the reason why some teachers suggested the postponement of programme and reintroduce it at the appropriate time.

Mamah (2006) cited Mamah (1999) posited that teachers who left teacher training colleges in Ghana by 1990 had no idea about education of children with special needs because special education had not been introduced into the curriculum of teacher training colleges at the time. These teachers require in-service training to enable them to handle children with special needs, but as the study findings indicated, the teachers were not given any training before the introduction of the inclusive programme.

5.4 Negative attitude

Teacher's attitude is an important determinant of smooth implementation of inclusive education. The study finding that some teachers have created barriers for special needs children may be attributed to inadequate training and preparation. As indicated above,

without adequate training and preparation on inclusion, teachers are most likely to develop negative attitude towards special needs children. The consequence is that special needs children will be subjected to inhuman treatment such as bullying and teasing by their teachers.

McKleskey, Henry and Axelrod (2003) noted that training and education are not only critical for successful implementation of inclusion programs but are critical to the development of positive teacher attitudes towards the concept of inclusion. This seems to support studies by Bowman (2011) and Pastor and Jimenez (1994) that while teachers agree theoretically on the idea of inclusion of person with disability in general classrooms, they hold negative attitude towards its implementation.

5.5 Ineffective teaching strategies and differential expectations

Teaching special needs children in both special and inclusive settings requires special and appropriate teaching strategies and materials to enable them cope with classroom situation. However, the findings of the study indicated that the teachers adopted their own teaching strategies to teach all children including those with special needs; they did not also develop differential expectations for special needs children in their class. Again, this may be attributed to inadequate preparation of teachers to teach special needs children in inclusive setting, and also, lack of teaching and learning materials (TLMS). Furthermore teachers' inability to develop differential expectations for children with special needs may be attributed to the structured time for lessons and to complete syllabus. Perhaps, some teachers adopted their own strategies in order to enable them to complete the syllabus and avoid being blamed for poor performance of their students. When teachers are under intense pressure to maintain academic standards, which is often the case in many schools, they are likely to ignore using appropriate teaching methods

and developing differential expectations for special needs children in their class. The likely consequence is that some children with special needs in the general classrooms may be forced to drop out of school because they would find it difficult to cope. This assertion is supported by Kibria (2005), Hossain (2004) and Lewis and Doorlag (2003). These studies mentioned that without appropriate teaching strategies, it will be difficult for children with special needs to participate in general schools, thereby resulting in many of them abandoning schooling.

The rigid position by some heads and teachers to maintain academic standard is in line with findings by Avoke, (2004) who stated that current trends in the Ghanaian educational system point to the maintenance of standards. Basic Education Certificate Examination results are analyzed and a league table prepared indicating the performance of each Education District. Similarly, the performance of all Senior High Schools (SHS) in the country is computed, a league table prepared and published in the national dailies. As a result, school heads and even District Directors of Education are concerned about the examination results of their schools and districts respectively. They are, therefore, not willing to compromise their standard and, sometimes, put pressure on teachers, compelling teachers to ignore the needs of students with special needs. Mamah (2006) also pointed out that in many countries such as Ghana, mainstream schools are under increasing pressure to raise academic standards. These schools are therefore reluctant to admit and retain pupils whose presence could have negative impact on the overall profile of results.

5.6 Conclusion

Findings from the study revealed that teachers had no knowledge on inclusive education before their schools were selected for the programme. In addition, the teachers were not adequately trained and prepared to teach special needs children, indicating inadequate preparation on the part of teachers to implement inclusive education. The findings further pointed out that, teachers adopted their own teaching strategies to teach all pupils' which may not benefit special needs children. This suggests that special needs children were not been catered for in class and probably some of them have stopped schooling. These findings are consistent with other research on education for children with special needs in Ghana and many other countries.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

6.0 Introduction

This study, with the broad objective to examine teachers' knowledge and preparation towards the implementation of pilot inclusive education in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality, specifically investigated: whether teachers in inclusive schools at EjisuJuaben Municipality were knowledgeable on inclusive education, if teachers in the inclusive schools were prepared to implement inclusive education, and the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of pupils with special needs. This chapter deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

6.1 Summary of the study

The findings from the study revealed that the teachers have no adequate knowledge of inclusive education before its implementation in the schools. The findings also revealed that most of the teachers were in favor of having special needs children in their classrooms, although a few of them felt uncomfortable having pupils with disabilities around them. Some of the teachers used derogatory remarks on the pupils which created barriers, preventing some the pupils from getting close to the teachers.

Additionally, it was revealed that teachers were inadequately prepared for the programme. For example, they were not taught how to teach individuals with special needs. As a result, some teachers used teaching strategies that were unsuitable for the children.

It, therefore, generally be concluded that teachers in the schools piloting the inclusive programme in the Ejisu-Juaben municipality were not well vested in handling special

needs children. This is mainly due to lack of adequate preparation and in-service training for the teachers.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the finding of the study, the following recommendations are made for consideration. The findings revealed that the teachers had no adequate knowledge of inclusive education. To remedy the situation, teachers should have more observation training on teaching special needs children in an inclusive setting to enable them to handle children with different categories of disabilities in the classrooms. It is further recommended that the Ghana Education Service (GES), in collaboration with special education division, should organize workshops, forums, and seminars on disability and related issues for teachers to make them more responsive to the needs of children with disabilities. Such forums could also serve as a central point of sharing information on inclusion, which will undoubtedly go a long way to update teachers' knowledge on inclusion.

Furthermore, findings from the study revealed that in-service training was not organized for all the classroom teachers who are directly involved in the teaching of special need pupils. It is, therefore, suggested that consistent in-service training should be organized for all general teachers in schools practicing inclusion to enable them manage pupils with special needs in and outside of the classroom. Periodic in-service training will refresh teachers' knowledge and equip them with best inclusive practices to effectively handle special need children in the inclusive classroom (Schulz and Turnbull, 1984).

It is also recommended that curricula of teacher training institutions and colleges of education should, as matter of importance, be redesign to include more courses on

inclusive education. Teacher trainees should be offered the opportunities to acquire practical experiences in inclusion through practice. Such strategies are likely to widen teachers' knowledge on inclusive education and also bring teacher trainees and special needs children closer from the on-set. This will help reduce teachers' negative attitude towards special needs children in the general school settings, which is one of the major factors hampering smooth implementation of inclusion education Alghazo & Gaad (2004).

The findings from the study revealed lack of teaching and learning materials in the schools. Therefore, Ministry of Education (MOE) and GES should make inclusive education one of their topmost priorities and restructure their budgetary allocations to include more resources for the provision of TLMS

6.3 Suggestions for future research

To achieve the aim of full inclusion as enshrined in Ghana's Educational Strategic Plan 2015, there is the need for further studies on the perception of special needs children towards inclusion.

6.4 Conclusion

This study sought to ascertain the level of knowledge and preparedness of teachers for the implementation of inclusive education in Ejisu-Juaben municipality in Ashanti region of Ghana. The findings of the study indicated that generally, teachers had no adequate knowledge of inclusive education and their attitude toward inclusion was not all that positive. Lack of adequate preparation and in-service training for the teachers

account for this situation. The findings from the study are consistent with other findings on the implementation of pilot inclusive education in Ghana.

Even though the study focused on the pilot inclusive schools in the Ejisu-Juaben municipality in the Ashanti Region, it is most probable that conditions in the study area might be similar to conditions in other educational districts piloting inclusive education. It is worthy to point out that ever since the introduction of the inclusive education programme started on pilot bases in the municipality, no evaluation has been carried out to assess the progress of the programme. Consequently, the study is alerting policy makers and all stakeholders in education to embark on intensive monitoring and evaluation to assess the strength and weaknesses before the programme assume full scale implementation.

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APPENDIX

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION LEAFLET AND CONSENT FORM

This leaflet must be given to all prospective participants to enable them to know enough about the research before deciding whether or not to participate

Title of Research: KNOWLEDGE AND PREPAREDNESS OF TEACHERS IN EJISU-JUABEN MUNICIPALITY TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION. Name(s) and

affiliation(s) of researcher(s): This study is being conducted by Dwomo Ababio Joseph, a Second year Master of Science student, in Disability, Rehabilitation and Development offered at Department of Community Health, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi.

Background:The importance of education to the human potentials makes it a fundamental human right for every member of society. Boison (2006) posited that education is a right for all and must be made accessible to all learners notwithstanding their cultural, linguistic, physical and intellectual backgrounds. In Ghana, successive governments have introduced series of policy initiatives with the view of ensuring reforms in educational sector. An important aspect of these reforms and policies has been that education should be for all. Gadagbui, (2010), stated that the free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE), aims at expanding, strengthening and making relevant education to *all* children. The author however mentioned that special needs children were not given much attention at the initial stages of the program however with the introduction of inclusive education the situation has improved. Advocates of inclusion propose that, special needs children should attend general schools in the vicinity where they would have attended if they were not disabled (Avoke 2004). Inclusive education became the official policy of the Ministry of Education Science and Sports (MOESS), and outlined in the Education Strategic Plan (ESP), 2003-2015 (Yekple&Avoke, 2006 p239). In Ghana, pilot projects are ongoing in selected educational districts including EjisuJuaben Municipality in Ashanti region. Government is to provide equal educational opportunities for children and youth with special needs at pre-tertiary levels to promote access and participation. This implies that general

teachers must prepare to teach all kinds of pupils including those who present special needs in the classrooms.

The purpose(s) of the study: The general objective of this study is to examine knowledge and preparedness of teachers towards the implementation of inclusive education in Ejisu-Juaben municipality.

Procedure of the research:

The study population will be recruited from inclusive schools within the Ejisu-Juaben Educational District. Head teachers, resource teachers and teachers in the inclusive schools within the municipality of Ashanti will be involved in in-depth interviews. The researcher will purposively recruit participants and engaged them in face to face interviews. Participants will be notified ahead of the actual day of interview. The interview will take place in their respective schools. The researcher will recruit five (5) head teachers, five (5) resource teachers and ten (10) general classroom teachers. In all, 20 participants will be recruited in the study. Semi structure interview guide will be employed by the researcher during interaction with participants. Voice recording will be done in the process of the interview which will be transcribe into word document.

The transcribed version will be kept and use by the researcher in confidence. The researcher will subject the data collected to content analysis.

Risk(s): The risk of this interview is that the participant's might feel uncomfortable providing vital information as well as disturbing respondents' busy schedules.

Benefit(s): The study will serve as a reference point for policy makers and other organizations that need data on inclusive education in the country. Findings and recommendations of the study will serve as a guide to policy makers and other stakeholders involved in promoting inclusive education.

Confidentiality: The participant is guaranteed full confidentiality and full anonymity. Nothing of this interview will be revealed to other participants or members of the community.

Voluntarism: Participation to the study is completely voluntary.

Alternatives to participation: No participation; this will not have any negative consequences for the person concerned.

Withdrawal from the research: Withdrawal from the research can be done at any time.

Consequence of Withdrawal: There will be no consequence, loss of benefit or care to you if you choose to withdraw from the study. Please note however, that some of the information may be modified or used in analysis, reports and publications. We do promise to comply with your wishes as much as practicable.

Costs/Compensation: There is no compensation for participating.

Contacts: Dwomo Ababio Joseph

Tel: 0209181887/0243617414

Further, if you have any concern about the conduct of this study, your welfare or your rights as a research participant, you may contact:

The Chairman

Committee on Human Research and Publication Ethics

Kumasi

Tel: 22301-4 ext 1098 or 020 5453785

CONSENT FORM

Statement of person obtaining informed consent:

I have fully explained this research to _____ and have given sufficient information, including that about risks and benefits, to enable the prospective participant make an informed decision to or not to participate.

DATE: _____ NAME: _____

Statement of person giving consent

I have read the information on this study/research or have had it translated into a language I understand. I have also talked it over with the interviewer to my satisfaction.

I understand that my participation is voluntary (not compulsory).

I know enough about the objective, methods, risks and benefits of the research study to decide that I want to take part in it.

I understand that I may freely stop being part of this study at any time without having to explain myself.

I have received a copy of this information leaflet and consent form to keep for myself.

Name _____

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE/THUMB PRINT: _____

APPENDIX I



KWAME NKURUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

CEDRES/FOL/13/02

April 08, 2014.

Director of Education
Ghana Education Service
P.O. Box 30
Ejisu Juaben Municipality

Dear Sir,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce **MR. DWOMO ABABIO JOSEPH** a graduate student pursuing MSc Disability, Rehabilitation and Development Programme in the Department of Community Health under the College of Health Sciences at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, to your organization.

Mr. Dwomo Ababio Joseph has successfully completed one (1) year of the academic work and is embarking on his research titled "**Knowledge and attitude of teachers towards the implementation of pilot inclusive education at Ejisu Juaben Municipality**" and has identified your organization for this purpose.

I will be very grateful if you permit him to conduct the survey in your educational district.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Anthony K. Edusei

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Private Mail Bag, University Post Office, Kumasi, Ghana. Phone: 233-03220-60293. Telex: 2555 UST (GH)
Fax 233-3220-60302 E-mail: ustlib@libr.ug.edu.gh website: www.knust.edu.gh

APPENDIX II

KWAME NKURUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

3rd July, 2014.

The Director of education

Ghana education Service

P.O. Box 30

Ejisu-Juaben municipality

Sir,

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A SURVEY IN YOUR
DISTRICT**

I am a second year, post graduate student studying disability and rehabilitation development in the department of community health, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and technology Kumasi. Presently, I am in the process of undertaking a survey purposely to gather information on teacher's knowledge and Preparedness towards the implementation of pilot inclusive education.

For the purpose of this study, schools where children with special needs with their peers without special needs are placed in the same classroom and taught by a general teacher (inclusion) is very much appropriate.

Until recently, children with special needs were segregated and placed in special schools for most of their educational experiences.

The adoption of inclusion policy as stated in the Ghana Education Strategic Plan 20032015, require teachers knowledge and Preparedness for its successful implementation.

Information provided by teachers in this study will be treated with the strictest confidentiality, and will be used to generate a summary of data that will enable us to identify the short falls and address if not all, key areas of grate concerns to colleges of education/universities, District, Regional or even national levels before the programme assumes full implementation in (2020) as planned.

I am seeking permission to conduct this study in your district. If permission is granted, twenty teachers in the inclusive schools in the municipality will be selected using purposive sampling technique and interview.

Should you need additional information on this study, please contact me on, 0209181887/0243617414 or my supervisor.

Counting on your usual co-operation.

DwomoAbabio Joseph.

(Student)

APPENDIX III

GHANA EDUCATION SERVICE EJISU-JUABEN MUNICIPAL

In case of reply the number and
date of this letter should be quoted



Municipal Education Office
P.O. Box 30
Ejisu-Ashanti

Tel. No. 03220-201779

REPUBLIC OF GHANJA

15th May, 2015

My Ref. No: GES/ASH/EJM/IUO/125/VOL.1/
Your Ref. No.

**ALL HEADTEACHERS
EJISU-JUABEN SCHOOLS**

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Mr. Dwomo Ababio Joseph a graduate student pursuing MSC Disability, Rehabilitation and Development Programme in the Department of Community Health under the College of Health Science at KNUST - Kumasi.

Mr. Dwomo Ababio Joseph is embarking on a research titled "knowledge and attitude of teachers towards the implementation of pilot inclusive education at Ejisu-Juaben Municipality.

Please accord him the necessary assistance.

Counting on your usual co-operation.


**EDWARD ADAMS
(MUNICIPAL DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION)**

APPENDIX IV

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES SCHOOL OF MEDICAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS, RESOURCE TEACHERS AND TEACHERS IN INCLUSIVE SCHOOL AT EJISU JUABEN MUNICIPALITY IN THE ASHANTI REGION.

Explain the goal of the research and introduce myself

A. Discussions

Please tell us your name, Rank, your job description, and how long you have been working in your present position.

School:

Region:

Interview date:

Duration:

Qualification:

Rank:

Number of years teaching:

Number of years in inclusive system: MAIN QUESTIONS

CONCEPT

1. What was your perception about inclusive before it was introduction in your school?
2. What does inclusive education mean to you?
3. What is your view about inclusive education policy?"
4. To what extent do you support the policy?

TEACHER PREPARATION

1. Are you special educationists?

2. Were you given any in-service training towards the implementation of inclusive education in your school?
 - a. What kind of in-service training were you given?
3. Was the in-service training given you enough for you in the teaching of special needs children in your school?
 - a. Explain:
4. Was the in-service training you had conducted by special Education Department of the University of Education Winneba or Special Education Division?
5. Do thing you were/are adequately prepared for this inclusive education?
 - a. Explain: **ATTITUDE OF TEACHERS**
1. How do you encourage and support children with special needs?
2. Were you having the feeling that these special needs children were going to infect you with their disability?
3. What do you think about mixing disabled children with non-disabled children in the same classroom? Is it the right thing to do? Explain?
4. How do you prevent disabled children from feeling isolated and lonely in your school?
5. How do you include their needs in your lesson preparation?
6. Have you been using the individual method of teaching in your class?
7. How is the response?
8. What are your views concerning the inclusion of special needs children in to the general education setting?
9. What are some of the activities that you encourage the disabled and their peers to do outside the classroom?
10. How do the special needs children react during these out of class periods?

Challenges:

Strategies to address these challenges:

IDENTIFIED DISABILITIES

1. What are some of the disabilities that have been identified in your school? Prompt:

How are you coping with them? END

-Any comment or remarks.

Thank you